

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Ink tank for an ink jet printer, containing an electronic memory device for storing information on the contents of the ink tank, said ink tank comprising an elongated casing having one end thereof adapted to be inserted into a mounting socket of the ink jet printer in an essentially horizontal direction, said electronic memory device being provided on a bottom side of the casing and configured to electrically engage the mounting socket under the weight of the ink tank.

2. The ink tank according to claim 1, further comprising a coupling member extending from said one end of the casing and adapted to engage a coupling member of the mounting socket so as to fluidly connect the interior of the ink tank with the ink supply system of the printer.

3. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the electronic memory device is configured as a button which is located near said one end of the casing.

4. The ink tank according to claim 1, wherein the electronic memory device is held in a mounting recess formed on the outside of a bottom wall of the casing.

5. The ink tank according to claim 3, wherein the button has a casing comprising a circumferential wall and a bottom wall which are both made of electrically conductive material but are electrically insulated from one another so as to form at least two electrical contacts.

6. A mounting socket adapted to receive and hold an ink tank which comprises a support arm which is provided with an upwardly biased spring contact which is adapted to engage the electronic memory device of the ink tank.

7. The mounting socket according to claim 6, wherein said support arm contains a second spring contact which is adapted to engage a circumferential wall of the electronic memory device.

8. The mounting socket according to claim 7, further comprising a coupling member adapted to be brought into engagement with a coupling member of the ink tank, said coupling members being held in engagement by snap-action, and wherein the second spring contact is biased against the circumferential wall of the electronic memory device in a direction opposite to the direction in which the coupling members are engaged.

9. The mounting socket according to claim 8, which is adapted to hold the ink tank in a cantilever fashion.

10. A mounted ink tank assembly which comprises:

an ink tank having a bottom wall provided with an electronic memory device and an end wall provided with a coupling member;

a mounting socket containing a mating, coupling member which is adapted to engage the coupling member of the ink tank, said mating coupling member also providing communication with an ink supply line, said mounting socket further containing contact springs which are adapted to provide electrical contact with the electronic memory device when the coupling member of the ink tank is operatively connected with the mating coupling member of the mounting socket, said electrical contact being facilitated by the weight of the ink tank.